

Changes to the NASA Performance Appraisal System - Agency moves from 3-Level Performance Rating System to 5-Level Performance Rating System

Since 2005, the Agency Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) has been actively seeking input from a variety of sources regarding the employee performance appraisal system for its effectiveness and in satisfying requirements from external stakeholders, such as Congress and the Office of Personnel Management. The Agency conducted focus groups at each Center and held Agency workshops to discuss the findings. Based on the information gathered from these sources, the Agency found there is a need to make additional changes to its program. These changes include:

- Modifying the current system to make meaningful distinctions in employee performance levels. The Agency will move from the current 3-level performance rating system to a 5-level performance rating system.
- Satisfying Government-wide requirements and allow for NASA to move into a Pay for Performance System.
- Providing additional training on the mechanics of the system.
- Providing additional resources and tools relating to performance management.

Major Benefits

- Improved alignment of individual performance plans to the Agency's goals and objectives;
- Greater emphasis on outcomes and results as the way to evaluate performance;
- A more direct link between performance ratings and award allocations; and
- A greater emphasis on communication and participation between employees and supervisors.

Major Revisions – These revisions will be effective at the beginning of the next appraisal period, May 1, 2007:

- Agency will move from a three-level performance rating system to a five-level performance rating system. New rating labels are:
 - Distinguished
 - Accomplished
 - Fully Successful
 - Needs Improvement
 - Unacceptable
- New adjective labels for performance element summary ratings
 - Significantly Exceeds Expectations
 - Exceeds Expectations
 - Meets Expectations
 - Needs Improvement

- Fails to Meet Expectations
- Required performance elements
 - Employees
 - Program/Project/Functional Objectives (PPFO) (the only mandatory, critical element)
 - Communications
 - Collaboration and Teamwork
 - Supervisors (both are critical)
 - Program/Project/Functional Objectives (PPFO)
 - Supervisory Competencies

In addition, the Agency will utilize an integrated training approach to include information and guidance on the mechanics of the EPCS, as well as, coaching skills training for supervisors and managers. The integrated training model will consist of the following:

1. An Agency online tutorial in SATERN for employees and supervisors which will provide overall information about the EPCS;
2. Coaching Skills for NASA Supervisors and Managers Training, will involve both classroom training and an ongoing process for participants to continue to build coaching skills, and
3. An extensive source of performance management information and data will be made available on the NASA People Web site.

The on-line tutorial for employees and supervisors/managers will take place in April 2007.

For more information about EPCS visit the [NASA People Web site](#).